

FEMA Awards Nearly \$10.3 Million to MBTA for COVID-19 Cleaning and Safety Costs

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BOSTON – The Federal Emergency Management Agency will be sending nearly \$10.3 million to the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) to reimburse it for the cost of keeping its public transit systems safe and operating during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The \$10,288,865 Public Assistance grant will reimburse the MBTA for the costs associated with disinfecting equipment and facilities between July and September 2020, as well as other steps taken to protect the public and its employees.

The authority used contract labor and paid overtime for its employees to disinfect the subway (the Red, Orange, Blue, and Green subway lines), bus (171 bus routes and 4 rapid transit routes), commuter rail, ferry, and The RIDE (MBTA's door-to-door paratransit service) systems.

The MBTA also provided personal protective equipment such as gloves, masks, hand sanitizer, and wipes to its personnel, installed barriers between operators and the public, and installed signage and crowd control measures at various locations throughout the system.

“FEMA is pleased to be able to assist the MBTA with these costs,” said FEMA Region 1 Regional Administrator Lori Ehrlich. “Keeping public transit operating safely during the pandemic was critical to allowing essential workers to continue to commute to their jobs, as well as providing service to the general public.”

FEMA's Public Assistance program is an essential source of funding for states and communities recovering from a federally declared disaster or emergency.

So far, FEMA has provided more than \$1 billion in Public Assistance grants to Massachusetts to reimburse the commonwealth for pandemic-related expenses.

